Amendments To Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1.   (Currently amended): A system for facilitating transactions among travel service suppliers and travel service buyers, the system comprising:

a technology provider configured to operate independently from travel service suppliers;

a communication network in communication with a plurality of centralized hub sites, and configured to provide access to a plurality of data distribution systems, a travel broker database, and a travel history database through the hub sites via the technology provider,

wherein the plurality of data distribution systems are connected to a plurality of travel vendor databases,

wherein the travel broker database is configured to store information about travel service inventory, and to be accessed by the travel service suppliers who post and edit travel service inventory and place reverse auction bids on posted travel service inventory, and to be accessed by the travel service buyers who browse and perform queries on the travel service inventory and accept reverse auction bids for travel service inventory from the travel service suppliers, and

wherein the travel history database is configured to store current information about a traveler's future travel plans and to be accessed by travel service buyers who use information about a traveler's future travel plans to place orders to travel service suppliers,

wherein the travel history database is configured to store past travel information derived from a plurality of travelers and negotiated contractual terms from a travel service supplier, wherein the negotiated contractual terms relate to travel use comprising a minimum transaction amount;

wherein at least one of the travel broker database and the travel history database stores information in a plurality of data sets in a plurality of formats; ~~and~~

a point of service terminal connected to the communication network and configured to access the travel broker database, the travel history database, and at least one of the plurality of data distribution systems,

<u>a trip module in communication with the point of service terminal, wherein the trip module is configured to receive a trip request via email and parse the trip request to obtain trip request data;</u>

wherein the point of service terminal is configured to route ~~dynamically select a travel~~ ~~service supplier by routing in real time~~, via the technology provider, the trip request data ~~a travel~~ ~~request~~ to a particular data distribution system in the plurality of data distribution systems based upon a comparison of the past travel information and the negotiated contractual terms such that the fulfillment of the travel request complies with the negotiated contractual terms,

and wherein the travel service buyers, the travel service suppliers, and the point of service terminal access the travel broker database, the travel history database, and the selected one of the plurality of data distribution systems via the technology provider through the communication network.

2.   (Previously presented): The system according to claim 1, wherein the plurality of data sets are stored as ungrouped data elements formatted as a block of binary via a fixed memory offset.

3.   (Previously presented): The system according to claim 1, wherein the plurality of data sets are annotated for storage onto a financial transaction instrument with at least one of: a header and a trailer.

4.   (Currently amended): A method for machine implemented facilitation of transactions among travel service suppliers and travel service buyers, the machine implemented method comprising:

configuring, by a processor, a travel history database to store current information about a traveler's future travel plans, past travel information derived from a plurality of travelers and negotiated contractual terms from a travel provider, wherein the negotiated contractual terms relate to travel use comprising a minimum transaction amount and to be accessed by travel service buyers who use information about a traveler's future travel plans to place orders to the travel service suppliers; ~~and~~

receiving, by a trip module, a trip request via email;

parsing, by the trip module, the trip request to obtain trip request data;

routing ~~dynamically selecting a travel service supplier by routing in real time~~, via a technology provider, the trip request data ~~a travel request~~ to a particular data distribution system in a plurality of data distribution systems based upon a comparison of the past travel information and the negotiated contractual terms so that fulfillment of the travel request complies with the

negotiated contractual terms,

providing the point of service terminal with access to the broker database, the travel history database, and at least one of the plurality of data distribution systems selected based on a contractual requirement embodied in a configuration item, via the technology provider through a communication network; and

storing information into the travel broker database and travel history database as a plurality of data sets in a plurality of formats,

wherein the communication network is configured to be in communication with a plurality of centralized hub sites, wherein the communication network is configured to provide access to the plurality of data distribution systems, a travel broker database embodied in a first data store, a travel history database embodied in a second data store, and a point of service terminal through the plurality of hub sites via a technology provider configured to operate independently from travel service suppliers, wherein the plurality of data distribution systems are connected to a plurality of travel vendor databases, configuring, by a processor, the travel broker database to be accessible by the travel service suppliers and the travel service buyers and to store information about travel service inventory, wherein the travel service suppliers post and edit information about travel service inventory, and place reverse auction bids on travel service inventory, and wherein the travel service buyers browse, perform queries, and accept bids in a reverse auction on the travel service inventory based on the posted travel service inventory information.

5.   (Previously presented): The method according to claim 4, further comprising the step of:

storing the plurality of data sets as ungrouped data elements formatted as a block of binary via a fixed memory offset.

6.   (Previously presented): The method according to claim 4, further comprising the steps of:

annotating the plurality of data sets; and

storing the annotated plurality of data sets onto a financial transaction instrument.

Claims 7-9.   (Canceled)

10.   (Currently Amended) A tangible, non-transitory computer-readable storage medium having stored thereon a plurality of instructions that, when executed by a computer, cause the computer to perform the following method comprising:

communicating with a plurality of centralized hub sites, wherein a communication network is configured to provide access to a plurality of data distribution systems, a travel broker database, a travel history database, and a point of service terminal through the plurality of hub sites via a technology provider configured to operate independently from travel service suppliers, wherein the plurality of data distribution systems are connected to a plurality of travel vendor databases;

configuring the travel broker database to be accessible by the travel service suppliers and the travel service buyers and to store information about travel service inventory, wherein the travel service suppliers post and edit information about travel service inventory, and place reverse auction bids on travel service inventory, and wherein travel service buyers browse, perform queries, and accept bids in a reverse auction on the travel service inventory based on the posted travel service inventory information;

configuring the travel history database to store current information about a traveler's future travel plans, past travel information derived from a plurality of travelers and negotiated contractual terms from a travel provider, wherein the negotiated contractual terms relate to travel use comprising a minimum transaction amount; and to be accessed by travel service buyers who use information about a traveler's future travel plans to place orders to travel service suppliers;

receiving a trip request via email;

parsing, by a trip module, the trip request to obtain trip request data;

routing dynamically selecting a travel service supplier by routing in real time, via the technology provider, the trip request data a travel request to a particular data distribution system in the plurality of data distribution systems based upon a comparison of the past travel information and the negotiated contractual terms so that the fulfillment of the travel request complies with the negotiated contractual terms,

providing the point of service terminal with access to the broker database, the travel history database, and at least one of the plurality of data distribution systems selected based on a contractual requirement embodied in a configuration item, via the technology provider through the communication network.

11.   (Previously presented) The tangible computer-readable storage medium of claim 10, further comprising storing the plurality of data sets as ungrouped data elements formatted as a block of binary via a fixed memory offset.

12.   (Previously presented) The tangible computer-readable storage medium of claim 10, further comprising

annotating the plurality of data sets; and

storing the annotated plurality of data sets onto a financial transaction instrument.

13.   (Previously presented) The tangible computer-readable storage medium of claim 10, further comprising storing information into the travel broker database and travel history database as a plurality of data sets in a plurality of formats.

14.   (Previously presented) The system of claim 1, wherein the reverse auction bids are opaque.

15.   (Previously presented) The tangible computer-readable storage medium of claim 10, further comprising populating a screen with the traveler's future travel plans.

16.   (Previously presented) The method of claim 4, further comprising populating a screen with the traveler's future travel plans.

17.   (Previously presented) The system of claim 1, wherein the communication network comprises a frame relay network.

18.   (Previously presented) The system of claim 17, wherein the communication network comprises an asynchronous transfer mode backbone and multiple redundant data centers.

19.   (Previously presented) The method of claim 4, further comprising

purchasing a travel itinerary; and

printing a record of the travel itinerary.

Claims 20 – 22. (Canceled)